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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT**ROUTING SLIP***ER*

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Remarks

3637 (10-81)

Executive Secretary
24 Mar '87

Date

STAT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

24 March 1987

TO: Director, Public Affairs

The attached is already on the calendar.
I send you the original for your files.



STAT

Executive Registry

87-1221X



THE BALTIMORE SUN

Washington Bureau

March 19, 1987

Mr. Robert M. Gates, Acting Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Gates:

Just a quick note to thank you for agreeing to be The Sun's guest at the White House Correspondents Dinner April 22. We are pleased you accepted the invitation.

As we get closer to the dinner, I will send you a brief rundown on The Sun notables who will be there as well as our other guests. One tantalizing prospect: Fawn Hall. Mike Kelly, one of my partners in crime, has asked her through intermediaries and is said to be one of two reporters in the running should she decide to go.

You and I have met only once, just before the Geneva Summit at a backgrounder in the Roosevelt Room arranged by Bud McFarlane. That being the case, I probably should tell you a little about myself. I've also enclosed a piece I did a few months back on Ollie North, with whom I share some common roots, that may say something about me, too.

I've been with The Sun, or its sister paper, the Evening Sun, since 1973. As a local reporter, I covered City Hall, the state legislature and state politics. During the 1979-80 academic year, I was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard where I hung around the Kennedy School and did some short story writing.

When that year ended, I was sent to Washington to open a one-man Evening Sun bureau. Although The Sun, by which we mean the morning Sun, has a large Washington bureau and a far-flung network of foreign correspondents, the Evening Sun simply depended on the wires for national and international stories. Why? Beats me. Tradition, I guess.

A year later, in a bit of fraternal piracy, I was hired away by The Sun. I covered Congress for about a year, then spent most of the next year doing investigative reporting, primarily on political action committees, later on a bizarre tale involving the United Mine Workers, Ike's grandson, a strange cleric and the old presidential yacht Sequoia.

I've covered the White House since March 1983, however, this past December I was assigned temporarily to investigative reporting on the Iran-contra affair, which is what I'm doing now.

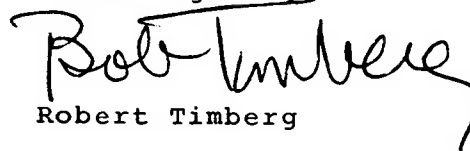
DCI
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No one likes surprises, least of all me, so I should apprise you of the following: Shortly before my tour in Vietnam was due to end, the tracked vehicle I was riding on hit a landmine that ignited the vehicle's fuel cells. I was caught in the blast of flame and severely disfigured. A lot of surgery has improved the situation, but not all that much.

At any rate, I'm glad you'll be joining us at the dinner. I apologize for not getting this note off sooner. I know you're busy and may not have time, but if you'd like to get together for lunch or a drink after work in advance of the dinner I'd love to do it. But I'll leave that up to you.

Best regards,


Robert Timberg

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DEC 07 1986

The shaping of Ollie North

By Robert Timberg

Washington

I don't know Ollie North, at least not well, but I think I know who he is and the institutions and events that shaped him.

Lt. Col. Oliver L. North and I both attended the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. He graduated in 1968, four years after me. We both were Marine infantry officers in Vietnam in the 1960s, his tour reportedly characterized by heroic exploits, mine largely mundane.

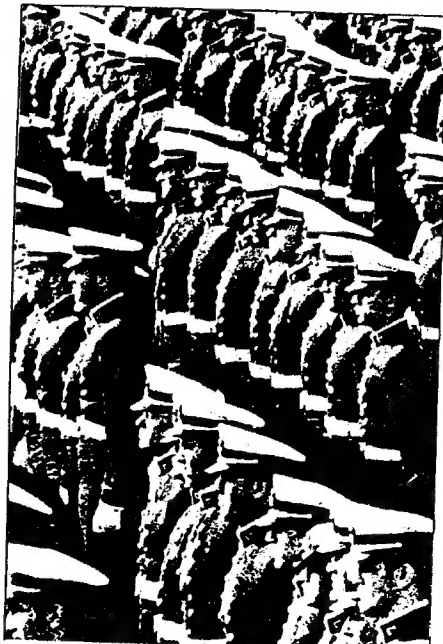
I later became a newspaper reporter, but Ollie stayed in the Marine Corps, moving into increasingly more responsible positions. In 1981, he became a member of President Reagan's National Security Council staff. Now he looks to be in big trouble.

The president and his attorney general, Edwin W. Meese III, and others say that Ollie was at the heart of a secret White House operation in which funds from U.S. arms sales to Iran were funneled to the Nicaraguan "contras."

The president has denied any knowledge of the operation. Even so, it has become a dagger aimed at the heart of his presidency, one that has undermined his credibility and raised serious questions about his competence. And Ollie North, we're told, is mostly to blame.

At the White House, it's been said, Ollie became the proverbial rogue elephant, dreaming up novel schemes to obtain the release of American hostages in Iran or to fund the contras, then recklessly executing them without informing his superiors.

He may have done all that and more. In the past



THE SUN

two weeks, he has taken on almost legendary dimensions, but even before the latest revelations his NSC colleagues often wondered what Ollie was up to. Today, the world wonders, me included.

At the same time, it's hard not to reflect on our common background — Annapolis, the Marine Corps, Vietnam — a series of experiences we shared with a few hundred others, a few of whom we keep in touch with, most of whom we've lost track of, some of whom are no longer with us.

Because those experiences came at a relatively impressionable age, and because they were so intense, it strikes me that a look at some of the elements that tie Ollie, me and the others together might help illuminate his reasons for acting as he did. If he did.

A word of caution. There is a stereotypical midshipman, just as there is a stereotypical Marine. If we all looked alike in our uniforms, we were no less individuals for that. And the last thing I want to do is deprive Ollie of his individuality, for better or for worse.

On our first day at the academy, after they shaved off our hair, we received a pamphlet entitled, "A Message to Garcia." It was about Teddy Roosevelt dispatching someone, whose name I long ago forgot, to Cuba, I think, with a message for someone named Garcia, whoever he was.

As I recall, the next thing Teddy Roosevelt heard was that Garcia had gotten whatever he was supposed to get. The messenger had taken the message and gone on his way without bothering Roosevelt with questions about how to do it or even, I think, asking who Garcia was. He just figured it all out.

If the details are hazy, the theme remains crystal clear to this day. When a commander gives you a lawful order, you don't hem and haw and talk the thing to death. You just go do it, and report back when you've accomplished your mission.

From everything I know about him, Ollie North was the kind of officer who took the message to

See NORTH, 31, Col. 4

Mr. Timberg covers the White House for The Sun.



Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C.
(703) 482-7676

ER 87

STAT

George V. Lauder
Director, Public Affairs


5 February 1987

ADCI:

Bob
Bob Timberg, BALTIMORE SUN, called to invite you to the White House Correspondents Association dinner on Wednesday, 22 April.

He said you accepted, but later had to decline his invitation last year. He wants you to feel under no obligation to him this year, as he recognizes you may have closer relationships to other journalists. Nonetheless, he extends the invitation.

STAT


George V. Lauder

Accept _____

Decline _____

*Wait until after
Confirmation*



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